

STAT

On the Trail of a Mole

INTREPID'S LAST CASE

By William Stevenson.

321 pp. New York:

Villard Books/Random House. \$16.95.

By James Bamford

ON a warm September Thursday in 1945 a tired young man in baggy pants crisscrossed the city of Ottawa with his wife and 2-year-old son. All day and the previous night he had been pounding the streets searching for someone who would take an interest in a shopping bag of papers he carried. First he visited the night editor of The Ottawa Journal who glanced at the pile and said, "No thanks." Then he trudged over to the Ministry of Justice where a policeman told him to come back the next day. At 8 o'clock the following morning the young man again made his way to the Ministry of Justice and asked to speak to the minister. He was sent to the Parliament building and, after a two-hour wait, was told the minister was too busy to see him. Then it was back to the Journal, once again to the Ministry, and finally to the Crown Attorney's office. Nobody seemed to care a whiff about his bag of papers.

The young man was Igor Sergeievitch Gouzenko, a slight, 24-year-old Russian attached to the cryptographic section of the Soviet Embassy. And what he was hauling around the Canadian capital were several reams of the Soviet Union's deepest secrets — including evidence that Moscow had penetrated the Manhattan Project and walked away with key pieces to the puzzle of the atomic bomb.

Mackenzie King, the Canadian Prime Minister, had been informed of the Russian and his bag of secrets within half an hour of Mr. Gouzenko's first approach to the Ministry of Justice, but delayed taking any action for fear of offending the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin. Mr. Gouzenko was "a political hot potato, too hot to handle," King later wrote. Eventually persuaded otherwise, the Prime Minister granted permission for accepting Mr. Gouzenko's appeal for political asylum.

For protection, the Gouzenko family was hidden at Camp X, a secret, wartime espionage training center bordering Lake Ontario. There, during long interrogations, Mr. Gouzenko told of extensive Soviet penetration of the West and named a Russian agent in Canada with the code name Elli. Later identified as Kathleen Willsher, a confidential sec-



THE ROYAL GAZETTE/KEVIN STEVENSON
Sir William Stephenson, code name
"Intrepid," accepting the General Donovan
Award in September 1983.

retary to the British High Commissioner, she was apprehended and prosecuted. But Mr. Gouzenko was later to suggest there was a second Elli, a Soviet mole high in British intelligence circles whose cover has never been blown.

Among those initially involved in the Gouzenko affair in 1945 was Sir William Stephenson who, under the wartime code name Intrepid, was in charge of London's New York-based British Security Coordination office. The B.S.C. was responsible for all clandestine British activities in the Western Hemisphere and for close liaison with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Office of Strategic Services, the wartime undercover intelligence operation.

Sir William and the B.S.C. were the subjects of William Stevenson's earlier best sell-

Continued

STAT